Oriental Rugs in the ROM

March 4 to June 28, 1976

# *From the Marmora to the Great Wall of China*

Temporary Exhibitions of
the Textile Department, no. 1

Royal Ontario Museum
Toronto

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**Veronika Gervers**

# The Collection

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The origins of the ROM's rug collection go back to the early years of this century when a number of pieces were acquired by the first director, Dr C.T. Currelly. In the 1920s, the George Crofts Collection contributed largely Far Eastern material, and in 1941 Miss Amice Calverley's Romanian rugs formed a start for the flat-woven group from the Balkans. The occasional gift helped to fill the gaps. In the last decade, nomadic rugs from Anatolia and Afghanistan, and a special project on felt-making, supported by the Canada Council, have opened new possibilities for research into the historical origins of both knotted and flat-woven carpets.

The Museum's oldest rugs are from the 18th century, but the majority date from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Numerous individual examples and smaller groups deserve attention. The fine knotted bags from Western Turkestan represent an outstanding and rare selection of 19th-century Turkmen weaving. The exquisite carpets of Eastern Turkestan are also important. The Chinese rugs, together with saddle and cushion covers, form perhaps the largest and most comprehensive group. Various types of flat-woven pieces, seldom well represented in Western museums or private collections, provide excellent study material. Evolving from Caucasian knotted carpets, the Daghestan embroideries are also significant. The many examples of Persian broadcloth mosaic-work (generally attributed to Resht), a technique which must have developed from the tradition of felt mosaic, offer another approach to rug studies. Some Anatolian, Caucasian, and Persian carpets, which for the most part are products of village workshops, show interesting variants.

The forty-one rugs shown here represent about a quarter of the ROM's oriental carpet collection. Although some pieces have always been on display in the galleries of the European and Far Eastern departments; and others were occasionally shown with fashionable costume settings, the Museum's only prior carpet exhibition presented a selection of flat-woven rugs to the public (*Kilim-Sumak-Cicim*, Textile Galleries, 1973-74). Covering the wide geographic area from Anatolia to China and Tibet, this display is the first to give a comprehensive survey of the collection. With special attention given to technical aspects, felt, flat weaves, and related embroideries are shown beside pile carpets. Garments and photographs from the respective areas provide additional colour and natural settings from the life of rug-producing peoples.

Starting on March 18, 1976, a continuing rotating display of oriental rugs in the main Rotunda of the Museum will feature larger carpets from the collection. The first four examples were chosen to complement this special exhibition.

# Catalogue

## Small Textile Gallery

1 **Flat-woven rug** *Caucasus, 19th century* Tabby ground (wool warp and weft) with *sumak* and plain brocading in multi-coloured wool and white cotton. One end with plaited warp fringes.
274cm x 216cm (loom-width)
The Amice Calverley Collection.
959.148.18

2 **Tent-band** *Turkmen (Yomud?), Western Turkestan (N. Afghanistan), 19th to 20th century* Warp-faced, white woollen tabby patterned in twining, brocading, embroidery, and knotted pile (Persian knot) with coloured wool. One end with long, plaited warp fringes.
565cm x 30.7cm (loom-width)
971.187.1

3 **Cover** with inserted work of coloured broadcloth and embroidery *Persian (Resht), 19th century.*
151cm x 131.5cm
The Lillian Massey Treble Collection.
912x14.13

4 **Saddle cover** *Caucasus (Azerbaijan?), 19th century* Slightly warp-faced, black woollen tabby with *sumak*-brocading in multicoloured wool and white cotton. Ends with plaited warp fringes.
157cm x 156cm Loom-width: 79cm
Gift of Mr Allen B. Fisher. 960.230

5 **Fragment of a 'dragon' or 'bird' rug** *Caucasus, Shirvan (?), 19th century* Wool warp, cotton ground weft, all over *sumak*-brocading in multicoloured wool and white cotton.
Loom-width: 92cm
The Amice Calverley Collection.
959.148.21

6 **Tapestry-woven rug** *Caucasus, 19th century* Wool warp and weft. Ends with plaited warp fringes.
318cm x 115cm (loom-width)
Gift of Mrs Edgar J. Stone. 964.57.2

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7 **Felt rug** *Iran, Shiraz, 1973.*
172cm x 110cm 973.336.82

8 **Tapestry-woven rug** *Kurdish(?), Eastern Turkey, Lake Van region, late 19th to early 20th century* Wool warp and weft. Ends with plaited warp fringes.
230cm x 160cm Loom-width: 80cm
971.340.60

9 **Tapestry-woven rug** *Turkey, Central Anatolia, Yahyali (?) near Kayseri, 19th century* Wool warp and weft. One end with short warp fringes.
375cm x 198cm Loom-widths: 96cm and 102cm 971.340.38

**Large Textile Gallery**

10 **Embroidered cover** *Caucasus, Daghestan, 18th century* Cotton tabby worked in cross stitch with multi-coloured silk.
165cm×144cm Loom-width: 72cm
969.221

11 **Embroidered cushion cover** *Caucasus, Daghestan, second half of 18th century* Cotton tabby worked in cross stitch with multicoloured silk.
114cm×72cm (loom-width)
Gift of Mrs Lillian Massey Treble.
910x110.58

12 **Embroidered cushion cover** *Caucasus, Daghestan, 18th century* Cotton tabby worked in cross stitch with multicoloured silk.
118cm×68cm (loom-width)
Gift of Mrs Lillian Massey Treble.
910x110.57

13 **Pair of rugs**, placed as cushions on chair seats *China, late 18th century* Cotton ground, silk pile (density: 42 knots per sq. inch) and gold foil wrapped threads.
George Crofts Collection.
924.26.19,a-b

14 **Floor rug** *China, 18th century* Cotton ground, wool pile.
155cm×80.5cm (loom-width)
Probably George Crofts Collection, 1920–25. 965x165

15 **Rug**, used as cushion *Tibet, Gyantze, ca 1930* Cotton ground, wool pile.
38cm×60cm
Gift of Mr R.W. Dunning. 946.77

16 **Rug**, placed as cushion on chair seat *China, first half of 19th century* Silk ground with silk pile. Field with *sumak*-brocading in gilt filé.
84cm×88cm
George Crofts Collection. 922.4.87

17 **Rug**, usually placed on seating platform *Tibet, Lhasa, ca 1900* Cotton warp, hemp weft, wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 8 per sq. cm).
167cm×81cm (loom-width) 971.447.9

18 **Tent-door hanging** *Turkmen (Kizil-Ayak or Saryk), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile with details in wild silk (Turkish knot; density: 135 per sq. inch, 1815 per sq. dm).
169cm×111cm (loom-width) 952x149.2

19 **Bag** *Turkmen (Saryk?), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 70 per sq. inch, 1612 per sq. dm).
88cm×138cm (loom-width)
951x123.9

20 **Bag** *Turkmen (Saryk?), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 228 per sq. inch, 3034 per sq. dm).
83cm×123cm (loom-width)
959x105.1

21 **Bag** *Turkmen (Saryk?), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 316 per sq. inch, 5000 per sq. dm).
73cm×127cm (loom-width)
951x123.2

22 **Rug** *Caucasus, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft, all over *sumak*-brocading in multicoloured wool. Ends with plaited warp fringes.
167cm×86cm (loom-width) 959x105.3

23 **Tapestry-woven 'palmette' rug** *Caucasus, Kuba, 19th century* Wool warp and weft. Ends with short warp fringes.
391cm×170cm (loom-width)
Gift of Mrs Gerard Brett in memory of Gerard Brett, MC, MA (Oxon). 969.6

24 **Rug** *Turkey, Western Anatolia, Gördes (Ghiordes) or Kula, late 18th to early 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 46 per sq. inch, 891 per sq. dm).
188.5cm×128.5cm (loom-width)
959x105.16

25 **Prayer rug** *Turkey, Lâdik (Konya), 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 48 per sq. inch, 713 per sq. dm).
223.5cm×112cm (loom-width)
908.14.2

26 **Tapestry-woven rug** *Turkmen, border of Western and Eastern Turkestan (N-E. Afghanistan), early 20th century* Wool warp and weft. Ends with warp fringes.
248cm×125.5cm (loom-width)
975.49.1

27 **Rug** *Eastern Turkestan, Kashgar, 18th century* Cotton warp, wool ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 52 per sq. inch, 768 per sq. dm).
274cm×128cm (loom-width) 911.22.1

28 **Bag** *Turkmen (Yomud?), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 127 per sq. inch, 1760 per sq. dm).
73.5cm×114cm (loom-width)
951x123.3

29 **Bag** *Turkmen (Saryk?), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 220 per sq. inch, 2354 per sq. dm).
67.5cm×107.5cm (loom-width)
951x123.11

30 **Bag** *Turkmen (Saryk?), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile with details in wild silk (Persian knot; density: 276 per sq. inch, 4312 per sq. dm).
73.5cm×122cm (loom-width)
951x123.8

31 **Flat-woven rug** *Afghanistan, 20th century* Warp-patterned tabby. Warp of coloured wool and white cotton, weft of brown wool.
277cm×193cm, sewn together from 15 widths. Loom-width: 25.5 cm
972.142

32 **Rug** *Iran, Shiraz (?), probably Quashgai, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 64 per sq. inch, 924 per sq. dm).
189cm×150cm (loom-width)
N. S. Robertson Bequest. 946.9

33 **Rug** *Caucasus, Shirvan (?), 19th century* Wool warp, cotton ground weft. Wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 88 per sq. inch, 960 per sq. dm).
175cm×111cm (loom-width) 910.112.1

34 **Rug** *Turkmen (Yomud), Western Turkestan, 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 120 per sq. inch, 1749 per sq. dm).
272cm×147cm (loom-width)
959x105.4

35 **Flat-woven rug** *Turkmen, Western Turkestan, 19th century* Weft-faced tabby (goat-hair warp, wool weft) with brocading in multicoloured wool. Ends with knotted warp fringes.
233cm×182cm (loom-width)
George Crofts Collection. 923.24.100

36 **Tapestry-woven rug** *Caucasus, 19th century* Wool warp and weft.
291cm×148cm (loom-width)
Gift of Mrs Edgar J. Stone. 964.57.3

37 **Tapestry-woven rug** *Turkmen, N. Afghanistan, 19th century* Wool warp and weft. Ends with warp fringes.
363cm×144cm (loom-width) 973.429.3

**Main Rotunda**

(38) **Rug** *Caucasus or N-W. Persia (Kuba?), 18th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 80 per sq. inch, 1380 per sq. dm).
276cm x 156cm (loom-width) 910.95.7

(39) **Rug** *Eastern Turkestan, Yarkand, 18th century* Cotton warp, wool ground weft. Wool pile (Persian knot; density: 64 per sq. inch, 900 per sq. dm).
246cm x 131cm (loom-width)
910x145.16

*Designed & hand-composed at the Dreadnaught press*

(40) **Rug** *Caucasus, Shirvan (?), 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 110 per sq. inch, 1548 per sq. dm).
252cm x 101.5cm (loom-width)
910x145.14

(41) **Rug** *Caucasus, Shirvan (?), 19th century* Wool warp and ground weft. Wool pile (Turkish knot; density: 64 per sq. inch, 1050 per sq. dm). Ends with plaited warp fringes.
316cm x 105cm (loom-width)
910x145.10

*Description of Far Eastern material (nos. 14-17) by John E. Vollmer.*

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